

COLLINGBOURNE DUCIS PARISH COUNCIL

D R A F T

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT
COLLINGBOURNE DUCIS VILLAGE HALL
ON THURSDAY 4 MAY 2006 AT 7.00 PM**

Present: Cllr P Shields (Chairman)

Cllrs Carter, Chandler, Cogdell, Cox, Price, Robinson, Stone and Whinton
Mr J Mason, Dist Cllr A Still, Sgt N Porter, Mr J Dowsett and Mrs A Bernard
and three members of the public.

Apologies for absence: Cllr Bale and Mrs L Rogers.

1. Annual Report of the Parish Council.

The Chairman said that the past year has been a busy one for the Parish Council in a number of areas. Current residential planning applications awaiting consents or with decisions pending total 45 and are of concern to the Council in relation to traffic and parking problems and pressure on the village infrastructure. He regretted that the Council had so far been unable to progress highway traffic improvements with Wiltshire County Highways at the Chicks Lane/Cadley Road junction on the High St or to get the signage and lighting issues resolved.

Most of the village benches were refurbished during the year and the new play area in Knapp Close is now fully operational and is inspected and kept tidy by the litter picker as part of his weekly routine which has made a marked improvement to the appearance of the village.

Cllr Shields recorded his thanks to all the volunteers in the Great Mere Community Conservation Group whose work has turned this land into a significant Parish amenity to the south of the village.

Throughout the year there have been minor acts of vandalism around the village. Dog fouling on the recreation ground still continues and although the Council stopped short of banning dogs from this area it will continue to look at ways of eliminating the problem. Of course the only real solution is for all dog owners to become more responsible, it is only the minority who are not.

During the year Tidworth has become a town. The District Councillor and parish council representatives will continue to attend various Committees within the Community Area to ensure that the village derives some benefit from projects currently being undertaken in the Community Area Plan. It is essential that development in Tidworth and Ludgershall does not lead to a decline in commercial prospects of business in the rural parishes.

Also during the year the PC lost two of its younger Councillors but has been fortunate to co-opt Cllrs Graham Chandler and Nicky Whinton giving it a full complement to go into the final year of the term of this Council. Cllr Shields stressed the importance of local people's involvement in this grassroots level of local government and hoped that this time next year there would be plenty of new candidates standing at the Parish Council elections in the village.

The Chairman then answered questions from those present.

2. Summary of the Council's financial performance for the year ended 31 March 2006.

Cllr J W Robinson said he anticipated that the un-audited annual statement of accounts will be available for approval by the Parish Council at the July meeting.

The Parish Council set a precept of £14,000 for the year ended 31 March 2006, there was additional forecast income of £4,356. Forecast expenditure was £18,501.

Actual income was £24,934. The major additional items contributing to the increase over forecast were £6,437 in grants to the Knapp Close play area, £156 interest, £205 burials and £200 training grant. Actual expenditure was £28,013. The major additional item contributing to the increase was £12,072 cost of the Knapp Close Play Area. Savings were made in Councillors' expenses, internet services and insurance and the contingency fund was not used.

Reserves at the end of the financial year were £11,330. This has been allocated to burial ground refurbishment (£2,000) and recreation ground repairs (£3,000) and litter contract (£2,100).

The PC has set a precept of £14,000 for the year ending 31 March 2007, no increase on last year. However it is expected that reserves will be depleted during this financial year and an increase in the precept may be unavoidable for the year ending 31 March 2008.

3. Headteachers' Report from Collingbourne C E Primary School.

Mr Jeff Mason said there were currently 99 pupils on roll and numbers were stable. The school receives good support from parents many of whom come in to help with various activities. This year a group of parents and villagers organised a 'fedge' building. The fedge as it grows will mark out part of the school's wildlife area. The PTA has raised funds which have helped to provide extra equipment for the children and the Friends of Collingbourne School provided the new outside play equipment which it is hoped will soon be opened. Future plans include a mini-Minack theatre for outside lessons.

One of Mr Mason's aims this year has been to make the curriculum much more exciting and enjoyable for the children. To this end an outside music teacher has been coming in to give brass lessons. A parent helper runs a German Club and an outside teacher (Deputy Head of Zouch Primary School) gives Spanish lessons at Key Stage 1. The recent Science Day run by scientists from Porton Down, doctors from Salisbury Hospital and the Army was a great success.

During the coming year Mr Mason will extend community involvement in the school. Already a local artist helps with Art Club and guest speakers come in. There are plans to develop the library and to extend ICT facilities. On the morning of Saturday June 10 a celebration will take place to mark first anniversary of the official school opening. Everyone is welcome to attend from 10.30 till 12.30.

Mr Mason then answered questions from those present.

4. Report from Wiltshire County Councillor.

There was no report as County Cllr Robert Hall was not present.

5. Report from Kennet District Cllr A Still.

District Cllr Still said that this would be the last year he would speak as a District Councillor as he strongly disagrees with the District Council's policy of swingeing cuts to staff and services. The Arts Officer, the Development Officer and several other officers have gone. He said that the District Council is politically controlled and has been for the last four years. Anyone who wants to stand as an Independent District Councillor will have his support. Cllr Still then referred the meeting to the KDC booklet "What have we done for you in 2005/6?" for further information on the District Council's activities. (Copy attached). Cllr Still then answered questions from those present.

6. Report from Wiltshire Constabulary.

Sgt Nigel Porter apologised that this was the first time the PC had met him explaining that he had been closely involved in closing down drug pushers in Ludgershall and Tidworth. He said he was acutely aware of the anti-social behaviour in the village and that two males and one female had been particularly targeted and have now signed up to anti-social behaviour contracts. This means that if they breach the contract they will be taken into the station and an anti-social behaviour order will be applied for. If that is breached there is a real risk of them going to prison. Sgt Porter stressed that after this work on enforcement there is now a need to work on engaging young people who have nothing to do other than hang around in the village. The monthly 'Bluez 'n Zoos' disco held at Tidworth Leisure Centre is proving a success and transport from villages is provided by Parnhams on the first Tuesday of each month.

PC Chris Spackman will be engaged in the Neighbourhood Policing Team later in the month. A meeting is to be arranged between the Community Beat Manager, the PC and the Police Community Support Officer.

Sgt Porter said that any officer attending a crime should report back within twentyfour hours. If not he asked that he is contacted as this is not what he expects from his officers. He stressed the importance of the community and the police working together.

Sgt Porter then answered questions from those present.

7. Statement of Accounts from the Village Hall Trust.

Mr John Dowsett, Treasurer, thanked the Parish Council for its grant of £300 last year and noted the Council's suggestions that any future requests to the Council for grants should be for specific projects rather than for general support. He submitted an interim financial report (copy attached) on the Village

Hall whose financial year runs until 31 June. As in previous years a full year's accounts will be provided after that date. He said that unlike last year this will be a normal year with lettings providing most of the income and anticipated that after receiving the final third of letting income from the two most significant users they will more than break even and have some money spare for contingencies finishing the year in a reasonably healthy position. Next year they hope to increase their income from private lettings for weddings/parties etc. Mr Dowsett welcomed the fact that parish councillors sitting on the Hall Committee furthered communication between the Village Hall and the Parish Council.

Mr Dowsett then answered questions from those present.

8. Report from the Great Mere Community Conservation Group.

Mrs Ann Bernard thanked the Parish Council for its initial donation of £100 saying that without this and other donations from three village businesses it was unlikely that the project would have got off the ground. During the initial phase of consultation, planning and accessing funds the Group began work on clearance, publicity, tendering and training of volunteers. At the end of November 2005 they received grants from Year of the Volunteer, Kennet District Council and Sustain the Plain. This funding enabled workshops for youth groups, youth groups making a bench, bridge and fence building, path clearance to the Mere and tool and shed purchase. Now the Group is obtaining its own insurance which will enable young people to participate in activities whereas previously only uniformed groups were covered.

Mrs Bernard then detailed work which had taken place in the 8 different sectors of the site, outlined plans for future spending of existing funds and described how the Group would be accountable to its donors and to the village.

Mrs Bernard then answered questions from those present.

9. Written Resolutions.

There being no resolutions to consider the Chairman thanked all the speakers.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.